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AN AMERICAN UNIVERSITY.

SECOND REPORT OF THE NATIONAL COMMITTEE.

Presented at the Saint Louis Meeting of the National Educational Association, August 23, 1871.]

To the National Educational Association:

For the reasons embraced in the records of the Association for the year 1870, the Committee on an American University confined their first report to a concise statement of the offices of a true University, and to a brief summary of the advantages to be derived from the establishment of such an institution in the midst of these States.

Without re-opening the discussion upon these branches of the general subject, we deem it proper, in this connection, to remark, that the further consideration of them, with an extensive correspondence, eliciting the opinions of many of the most distinguished educators and statesmen of the country, has had the effect not only to strengthen our conviction of the correctness of

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LC 174
.N3

the positions there taken, but also to satisfy us that any well devised scheme for the accomplishment of the object proposed will receive the cordial sympathy and support of the great majority of intelligent and liberal minded citizens.

Your Committee are also gratified to be able to report a general concurrence, on the part of the eminent men who have expressed their views upon the subject, in those large and liberal ideas of university education which only are adequate to the growing and already pressing demands of our country and times.

It was not deemed important in our first report, nor is it thought to be necessary in this, to mark the details of what the institution should be. They are better left to the wisdom of those who shall be hereafter charged with that responsible duty.

It may be proper, however, to state in general terms :

1. That it should be broad enough to embrace every department of science, literature and the arts, and every real profession.
2. That it should be high enough to supplement the highest existing institutions of the country, and to embrace within its field of instruction the utmost limits of human knowledge.
3. That, in the interest of truth and justice, it should

guarantee equal privileges to all duly qualified applicants for admission to its courses of instruction, and equal rights and the largest freedom to all earnest investigators in that domain which lies outside the limits of acknowledged science.

4. That it should be so constituted and established as to command the hearty support of the American people, regardless of section, party or creed.

5. That its material resources should be vast enough to enable it not only to furnish—and that either freely or at nominal cost—the best instruction the world can afford, but also to provide the best known facilities for the work of scientific investigation, together with endowed fellowships and honorary fellowships, open respectively to the most meritorious graduates and to such investigators, whether native or foreign, as, being candidates therefor, shall have distinguished themselves most in the advancement of knowledge.

6. That it should be so co-ordinated in plan with the other institutions of the country as not only in no way to conflict with them, but, on the contrary, to become at once a potent agency for their improvement and the means of creating a complete, harmonious and efficient system of American education.

With this outline of a great and true University in

their minds, your Committtee have not deemed it possible that the institution should be so established, endowed and maintained as to enable it to fulfill its mission except with the co-operation of the Citizen, the State, and the General Government.

By means of such co-operation, it may be made national in every important sense, and yet possess all that freedom from undue governmental authority necessary to insure to it a place in the confidence and affection of those who, being naturally opposed to a centralization of power, are inclined to deny to the General Government other powers than those actually and explicitly prescribed in the Constitution of the United States.

The original endowment—which should not be less than the equivalent of ten millions of dollars, and which may properly consist of lands now embraced in the public domain—will need to be furnished by the Government, and Congress must therefore determine the general terms and conditions upon which the institution shall be administered. But proper authorities in the several states may have a voice in its management, as well as in the nomination of candidates for admission to its privileges; and individual citizens and associations of citizens should be cordially invited to endow such departments of instruction, illustration, or investi-

gation, as shall most enlist their sympathies; for however large such original endowment, unless it should greatly exceed the necessities of the present time, supplementary endowments will be in demand, as a necessity of the ever-widening circle of human knowledge.

If there be any friends of education who, desiring the end sought to be attained by the Association, nevertheless regard the idea of a central University as novel, and to be entertained with caution, or who, in their extreme conservatism, are in some doubt as to the authority of Congress to endow and establish such an institution, they are respectfully referred—

1. To the proceedings of the Federal Convention which framed the Constitution of the United States; from which it appears that propositions by Messrs. Madison, Pinckney and others to include the power “to establish a University” among the prescribed powers of Congress were set aside solely on the ground that such specifications were “unnecessary,” since provisions already embraced in the Constitution, as well as the exclusive power of Congress at the seat of government, “would reach that object.”

2. To the successive recommendations of presidents Washington and Madison, in their messages to Con-

gress, urging "the expediency of establishing a National University."

3. To that remarkable provision in the last will and testament of Washington, by which, still mindful of the honor of his country and the best good of coming generations, he "gave and bequeathed in perpetuity" five thousand dollars in the shares of the Potomac Company, "towards the endowment of a University to be established within the District of Columbia, under the auspices of the general government, if that government should incline to extend a fostering hand towards it."

4. To the several propositions to this end, which at various dates more recent have been urged by many of the most eminent men of the country.

If these opinions of the framers of the Constitution, of the Father of his Country, and of modern statesmen do not convince, there is still the authority of the Supreme Court of the United States for the doctrine that, "there is nothing in the Constitution of the United States, similar to the Articles of Confederation, which excludes incidental or implied powers;" that, "if the end is legitimate, and within the scope of the Constitution, all the means which are appropriate, which are plainly adapted to that end, and which are not prohib-

ited, may constitutionally be employed to carry it into effect"—a ground upon which many liberal constructionists have been wont to rest with great confidence.

Moreover, the Government has established precedents which may be urged with much force as affording warrant for the exercise of such authority as is proposed.

The common schools of the country, the state universities, the schools of agriculture and the mechanic arts, the Smithsonian Institution and the Department of Education are honorable proofs of the liberal construction which has already been put upon the Constitution in this regard.

The idea of a National University, then, is as old as the nation, has had the fullest sanction of the wisest and best men of succeeding generations, and is in perfect harmony with the policy and practice of the Government.

Assuming now, that the questions of need on the part of the country, and of expediency and power on the part of the Government, have been settled in the affirmative, it remains but to determine the means best calculated to secure the adoption of the most judicious plan for the institution, and to insure the congressional and other aid necessary to the full success of the enterprise.

Where the magnitude of an undertaking is so great, its importance so vital, and the unanimity of all classes and sections so essential, prudence would dictate that each step be taken only after careful deliberation.

On the other hand, it should be borne in mind that the best portions of that public domain, to which we must look for the means of founding the University, are rapidly passing into the hands of great corporations for various internal improvements, and of private speculators, who acquire and hold them chiefly for their own personal aggrandizement; so that any considerable delay on the part of the friends of the proposed institution may place this most natural and feasible source of endowment forever beyond its reach.

In view of these considerations, your committee have resolved to recommend that there be raised a new and permanent committee of less numbers than the present—say fifteen—yet embracing representatives of the leading professions and interests, as well as of the several geographical divisions of the country, and including the president of this Association, the National Commissioner of Education and the presidents of the National Academy, the American Scientific Association and the American Social Science Association as ex-officio members, to be known as the National Universi-

ty Committee, and to be charged with the duty of further conducting the enterprise to a successful issue, whether by means of conference and correspondence, or through the agency of a special convention.

With a view to the greater efficiency of said committee, it should be provided that a quite limited number of members thereof should be a quorum for the transaction of business at any regularly called meeting, and that a majority shall have power to supply such vacancies as may occur by reason of the declination or resignation of any of its members.

A committee of this character would be able, in the first place, to concentrate the best thought of the country upon the various important questions involved in the perfection of a plan for the institution; and secondly, to marshal the strength of the country in systematic and effective support of the measure, when at last formally brought to the attention of Congress.

(Signed.)

JOHN W. HOYT, Wisconsin,

NEWTON BATEMAN, Illinois,

B. C. HOBBS, Indiana,

A. S. KISSELL, Iowa.

P. McVICKAR, Kansas,

M. A. NEWELL, Maryland,

W. F. PHELPS, Minnesota,

DANIEL READ, Missouri,
J. W. BULKLEY, New York,
J. P. WICKERSHAM, Pennsylvania,
J. M. MCKINSEY, Nebraska,
A. N. FISHER, Nevada,
A. J. RICKOFF, Ohio,
C. L. P. BANCROFT, Tennessee,
A. D. WILLIAMS, West Virginia,
W. M. RUFFNER, Virginia,
Z. RICHARDS, District of Columbia.

The foregoing Report of the Committee was unanimously adopted, and at the next subsequent session, in accordance with the will of the Convention, the President announced the permanent National University Committee, as follows :

Dr. J. W. Hoyt, Chairman, Madison, Wis.
Dr. Thomas Hill, Waltham, Mass. .
E. L. Godkin, Esq., New-York City.
Hon. J. P. Wickersham, Harrisburg, Penn.
Dr. Barnas Sears, Stanton, Va.
Col. D. F. Boyd, Baton Rouge, La.
Dr. Daniel Read, Columbia, Mo.

Prof. W. F. Phelps, Winona, Minn.

Ex-Gov. A. C. Gibbs, Portland, Oregon.

Hon. Newton Bateman, Springfield, Ill.

Ex-officio Members :

Hon. E. E. White, President elect National Educational Association, Columbus, O.

Hon. John Eaton, Jr., Commissioner of Education, Washington, D. C.

Dr. Joseph Henry, President National Academy of Sciences, Washington, D. C.

Dr. J. Lawrence Smith, President American Association for the Advancement of Science, Louisville, Ky.

Dr. Samuel Eliot, President American Social Science Association.





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